

Appln. No. 09/996,347
Amdt. dated May 12, 2005
Reply to Office action of Jan. 12, 2005

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (Currently Amended): A generally rectangular carton configured for automated loading of a product and formed from a single carton blank, the carton comprising:

- a top panel and a bottom panel opposite the top panel;
- a pair of side panels, each side panel extending between edges of the top and bottom panels;
- a front panel extending between edges of the top, bottom, and side panels;
- a back panel opposite the front panel extending between edges of the top, bottom, and a pair of major side panels; and
- a window opening in the front panel selectively accessible via a hinged panel, the hinged panel having a front portion and a side portion adjacent thereto, the side portion being slidable in a substantially protected region between ~~one of the side panels~~ and a secondary side panel and a tertiary side panel adjacent the one of the major side panels, the secondary side panel being substantially the same length as the adjacent ~~one of the tertiary side panel panels~~ and the secondary and tertiary side panels being connected to the side panel along at least a portion of the length their edges, the protected region being effective to reduce or avoid interference between the side portion and the product.

Claim 2 (Original): A carton according to claim 1, wherein the protected region is effective to reduce or avoid interference between the side portion and the product during loading of the product into the carton.

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Claim 3 (Original): A carton according to claim 1, wherein the protected region is effective to reduce or avoid interference with the product during pivoting of the hinged panel.

Claim 4 (Original): A carton according to claim 1, wherein the carton includes a window opening in the back panel, the window opening being accessible by pivoting a portion of the back panel relative to the remainder of the back panel.

Claim 5 (Original): A carton according to claim 4, wherein the portion of the back panel is foldable to present a display surface formed thereon.

Claim 6 (Original): A carton according to claim 5, wherein the portion of the back panel includes a tab insertable into a slot formed in one of the top and bottom panels when the portion of the back panel is folded to present the display surface formed thereon.

Claim 7 (Original): A carton according to claim 6, wherein the carton is convertible between a first position permitting access to product within the carton via the window opening in the front panel and a second position permitting access to product within the carton via the window opening in the back panel.

Claim 8 (Previously Presented): A carton for containing one or more products, the carton comprising:

- a front panel;

- a first product dispensing configuration wherein the product is accessible through a window formed in the front panel; and

- a door selectively providing access to the first window, the door having a first portion being slidable between substantially adjacent first and second major panels being substantially the same length and connected to each other effective to reduce interference between the product and the door portion during opening and closing of the door, the first and second major panels being adjacent to a back major panel having

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substantially the same length, and the back major panel being connected to a back panel.

Claim 9 (Previously Presented): A carton according to claim 8, wherein the carton is convertible between the first product dispensing configuration a second product dispensing configuration effective to allow product access through a window formed in the back panel.

Claim 10 (Previously Presented): A carton according to claim 9, wherein the back panel is located opposite the front panel.

Claim 11 (Previously Presented): A carton according to claim 10, wherein the door comprises a second portion being slidable between a second pair of substantially adjacent first and second major panels, the first and second major panels disposed opposite the other pair of first and second major panels.

Claim 12 (Previously Presented): A carton according to claim 11, wherein the first and second portions of the door are effective to limit the outward extension of the door relative to the front panel.

Claim 13 (Withdrawn): A method of loading product into the interior of a carton formed from a single carton blank, the method comprising:

providing a panel of the carton with a hinged door selectively permitting access to the interior of the carton, the hinged door having at least one side portion extending between the door and the carton;

loading the product into the interior of the carton; and

positioning the side portion of the door to be slidable between two substantially adjacent panels of the carton during loading, the adjacent panels being substantially the same length to limit or avoid interference between the side portion of the hinged door and the product during the loading of the product into the interior of the carton.

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Claim 14 (Withdrawn): A method of loading product into the interior of a carton according to claim 13, including adapting the side portion to limit the opening of the door.

Claim 15 (Withdrawn): A method of loading product into the interior of a carton according to claim 13, wherein a window opening is provided in a panel different from the panel having a hinged door.

Claim 16 (Withdrawn): A method for forming a carton from a blank, the blank comprising a front panel having a window opening provided therein, a pair of primary side panels attached to opposite edges of the front panel, and a door having side portions, the door being hinged relative to the front for selectively permitting access to the window opening of the front panel, the method comprising:

providing the front and primary side panels in a substantially coplanar arrangement;

aligning the side portions of the door with the primary side panels while the front and primary side panels remain substantially coplanar; and

positioning a secondary side panel adjacent to each of the primary side panels while the front and primary side panels remain substantially coplanar such that the respective side portion of the door is slidable, when the blank is formed into a carton, between the primary and secondary side panels of the formed carton, each of the secondary side panels being connected to one of the primary side panels along edges thereof.

Claim 17 (Withdrawn): A method for forming a carton according to claim 16, wherein the blank comprises a top panel and a bottom panel attached to opposite edges of the front panel, the front panel edges having the top and bottom panels attached thereto being different from the front panel edges having the primary side panels attached thereto, a back panel attached to edges of the top and bottom panels, the edges of the top and bottom panels having the back panel attached being opposite from those having the front panel attached thereto, the back panel having a pair of

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tertiary side panels attached thereto along edges thereof being different from the back panel edges having the top and bottom panels attached thereto.

Claim 18 (Withdrawn): A method for forming a carton according to claim 17, comprising providing the carton blank in a collapsed state wherein the front and primary side panels are substantially coplanar and the back and tertiary side panels are substantially coplanar, and the front and primary side panels and the back and tertiary side panels are generally adjacent.

Claim 19 (Withdrawn): A method for forming a carton according to claim 18, comprising shifting the carton blank from the collapsed state to an upright state wherein the top and bottom panels are substantially normal to the front and back panels while the primary side panels remain substantially coplanar with the front panel and the tertiary side panels remain substantially coplanar with the back panel to enable insertion of one or more products between the top, bottom, front, and back panels.

Claim 20 (Withdrawn): A method for forming a carton according to claim 19, comprising folding the primary side panels into a substantially normal alignment with the front panel and folding the tertiary side panels into a substantially normal alignment with the back panel to close the carton.

Claim 21 (Withdrawn): A method for forming a carton according to claim 20, wherein the back panel comprises an opening for permitting access to the interior of the formed carton.

Claim 22 (Currently Amended): A carton for containing one or more products, the carton comprising:

a plurality of panels forming the carton, including a first front panel, a back panel and a pair of major side panels each attached to an edge of the first panel one of the front and back panels, a pair of secondary side panels each attached to an edge of the other of the front and back panels, and a tertiary side panel attached to each of the

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secondary side panels along an edge opposite the edge attached to the other of the front and back panels, the major, secondary and tertiary side panels each having a length;

a window formed in the first panel to provide access to the product;

a door hinged relative to the first panel selectively providing access to the window, the door having a first side portion and a second side portion opposite the first side portion, the first and second side portions at least partially extending between the door and the carton; and

means between the secondary and tertiary side panels for limiting interference between the product and the first and second side portions of the door ~~along the length of the side panels~~ during loading of product into the carton.

Claim 23 (Previously Presented): A carton according to claim 22, comprising means for limiting the outward extension of the door relative to the first panel.

Claim 24 (Previously Presented): A carton according to claim 23, comprising means for providing access to the product via an opening different from the window.

Claim 25 (New): A carton in accordance with claim 1, wherein the secondary side panel is connected to one of the front and back panels along at least a portion of the length opposite the length connected to the tertiary side panel.

Claim 26 (New): A carton in accordance with claim 25, wherein the major side panel is connected to the other one of the front and back panels opposite the secondary and tertiary side panels.

Claim 27 (New): A carton in accordance with claim 1, wherein the hinged panel has a side portion on opposing sides of the front portion, each of the side portions being slidable in a substantially protected region between a secondary side panel and a tertiary side panel adjacent one of the major side panels, the secondary side panel being substantially the same length as the adjacent tertiary side panel and connected

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to the tertiary side panel along at least a portion of the length, the protected region being effective to reduce or avoid interference between the side portion and the product, each of the secondary side panels is connected to one of the front and back panels along at least a portion of the length opposite the length connected to the tertiary side panel and each of the major side panels is connected to the other one of the front and back panels opposite the secondary and tertiary side panels.